Claims 1 – 111 (cancelled)

112. (currently amended) Apparatus for responding to a request, the request including one or more specifiers referring to objects belonging to a plurality thereof in a distributed database system that includes a plurality of database systems and
the apparatus comprising:
a first database system of the plurality of database systems;
a query analyser that determines whether the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the first database system; and
a redirector which responds to the request when the query analyzer so determines~~the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the first database system~~ by causing the request to be executed at least in part in a second database system of the plurality of database systems,
the request ~~otherwise~~ being executed in the first database system when the query analyzer does not so determine.

113. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 112 wherein:
the objects in the first database system include copies of objects contained in at least one other database system belonging to the distributed database system.

114. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 113 wherein:
the first database system functions as a cache with regard to the objects whose copies are included in the first database system.

115. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 113 wherein:
the other database system is the second database system.

116. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 115 wherein:

the first database system functions as a cache with regard to the second database system.

117. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with any one of claims 112 through 116 wherein:

the apparatus is local to a server of the type that provides a program executing on the server with a standard interface for querying databases; and

the requests include queries received via the standard interface.

118. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 117 wherein:

the server obeys the hypertext transfer protocol (http) and the program is a Web application program.

119. (previously presented) A method of responding to a request, the request including one or more specifiers that refer to one or more objects in a distributed database system that includes a plurality of database systems and

the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the request in a first database system of the plurality of database systems;

determining whether the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the first database system; and

when the request includes such a specifier, causing the request to be executed at least in part in a second database system of the plurality of database systems.

120. (previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 119 wherein:

the objects in the first database system include copies of objects contained in at least one other database system belonging to the distributed database system,

whereby the first database system functions as a cache with regard to the objects whose copies are included in the first database system.

121. (previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 120 wherein:

the other database system is the second database system,

whereby the first database system functions as a cache with regard to the second database system.

122. (previously presented) The method in accordance with any one of claims 119 through 121 wherein:

the first database system is local to a server of the type that provides a program executing on the server with a standard interface for querying databases; and

in the step of receiving the request, the request is received via the standard interface.

123. (previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 122 wherein:

the server obeys the hypertext transfer protocol (http) and the program is a Web application program.

124. (previously presented) A memory device characterized in that:

the memory device contains code which, when executed in a processor, performs a method of responding to a request, the request including one or more specifiers that refer to one or more objects in a distributed database system that includes a plurality of database systems and the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the request in a first database system of the plurality of database systems;

determining whether the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the first database system; and

when the request includes such a specifier, causing the request to be executed at least in part in a second database system of the plurality of database systems.

125. (currently amended) Apparatus for caching copies of objects belonging to a subset of the objects belonging to a first database system that returns an object in response to a request therefor, the request including one or more specifiers referring to the objects and the apparatus comprising:

a second database system that contains the copies;

a query analyser that determines whether the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the second database system; and

a redirector that responds to the request when the ~~request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the second database system~~query analyzer so determines by causing the request to be executed at least in part in the first database system, the request ~~otherwise~~ being executed in the second database system when the query analyzer does not so determine.

126. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 125 wherein:

the apparatus is local to a server of the type that provides a program executing on the server with a standard interface for querying databases; and

the requests include queries received via the standard interface.

127. (previously presented) The apparatus in accordance with claim 126 wherein:

the server obeys the hypertext transfer protocol (http) and the program is a Web application program.

128. (previously presented) A method of responding to a request that includes one or more specifiers referring to one or more objects belonging to a set of objects where the objects are stored in a first database system and copies of a subset of the set of objects are stored in a second database system,

the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the request in the second database system;

determining whether the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the second database system; and

when the request includes such a specifier, causing the request to be executed at least in part in the first database system instead of in the second database system.

129. (previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 128 wherein:

the second database system is local to a server of the type that provides a program executing on the server with a standard interface for querying databases; and

in the step of receiving the request, the request is received via the standard interface.

130. (previously presented) The method in accordance with claim 129 wherein:

the server obeys the hypertext transfer protocol (http) and the program is a Web application program.

131. (previously presented) A memory device characterized in that:

the memory device contains code which, when executed in a processor, performs a method of responding to a request that includes one or more specifiers referring to objects belonging to a set of objects where the objects are stored in a first database system and copies of a subset of the set of objects are stored in a second database system, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the request in the second database system;

determining whether the request includes a specifier that cannot be interpreted in the second database system; and

when the request includes such a specifier, causing the request to be executed at least in part in the first database system instead of in the second database system.